

REMARKS

Applicant responds to the final Office action mailed on March 22, 2005, by filing a request for continuing examination, the above additional claim, and the following remarks which are responsive to the previous Office action.

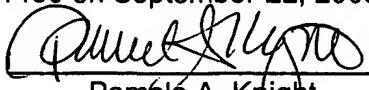
Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,444,635 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,990.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is improper because the '635 patent to Caron has a priority date of December 2, 2002. Whereas, the claims in applicant's pending application, including 1, 2, 4-8, and new claim 10 are fully supported by the provisional application Serial No. 60/405,068 which was filed on August 20, 2002. Accordingly, the '990 patent is not prior art. None of the prior art of record, alone or in any combination, teaches or suggests the invention recited in the claims.

Applicants believe that this application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on September 22, 2005.


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Respectfully submitted,

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